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CUT-AND-FOLD PENNY P.20

CLUBHOUSE

CHAT WITH CLOUDS P.12

JAMIE GRACE FROM OUTCAST TO OUTSTANDING ARTIST 21

BIRDS IN THE BIBLE P.4

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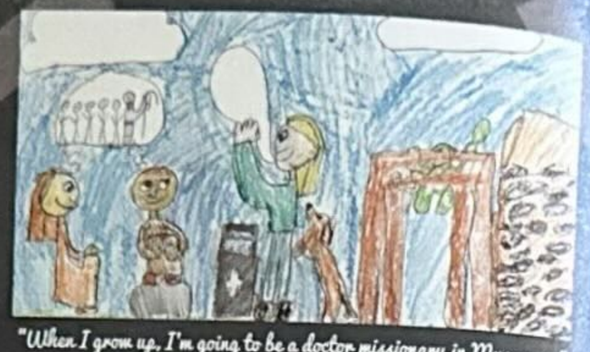
U Send

Titus K., 10, Cook Station, Missouri



"When I grow up, I'm going to be a doctor missionary in Myanmar."
Stacia D., 10, Oswego, New York

Dear Clubhouse,
I always look forward to getting a new issue of Clubhouse magazine. My favorite parts are "Adventures of Average Boy" and "Candid Conversations with Connie." They are always funny. Thank you very much.

Lauren G., 12, McAlisterville, Pennsylvania

Thanks, Lauren! Writing God-honoring humor can be tricky. That's why we're so thankful to work with clever authors like Bob Smiley and Kathy Buchanan. Not only do they make us laugh, they also teach us about walking with Jesus.

God Guides

Loving Savior, Dearest Friend
The Potter who molds and mends.
Alpha and Omega, Beginning and End
The Master whose disciples He sends.

The Promised One, the Prince of Peace
The Good Shepherd who sustains our needs.
The King of kings, the Lord of lords
Mighty God, the Double-Edged Sword.

We, as sheep in God's great flock,
Must open the door when He knocks.
And let the Master lead the way
All the time, and every day.

Annalise L., 13, Evans, Georgia

Super Strawberry Smoothie

GATHER

- 3 bananas
- 8 strawberries
- 2 scoops vanilla ice cream
- 5 ice cubes

GO

1. Blend together bananas, strawberries, ice cream and ice cubes.
2. Pour into cups and share!

Carys J., 9, Mission, British Columbia

A Brother's Prayer

Several years ago, my older brother Brandon went to the doctor for an ingrown toenail. On his way out of the office after getting some treatment, he became dizzy and passed out. The spot where he fell had only a thin carpet over hard concrete.

Doctors rushed him to the hospital for emergency brain surgery. We found out that Brandon fractured his skull and there was internal bleeding. He received 27 staples and two titanium plates in his head.

We prayed a lot during that hard time, and God answered our prayers. We thank God every day that Brandon is alive.

Jacob A., 14, Kennewick, Washington

God healed Jacob's brother, Brandon.

Refuge From the Storm

Three years ago, my family went boating on Lake George in New York. My dad looked at the weather and saw a really big storm coming. We were too far out from where we parked our truck and trailer, so we were stuck in the storm! We decided the best thing to do was dock at a nearby island where some people were camping. The campers had a big tarp over their picnic tables, and we stood under it with them.

God protected Rachel's family in a storm.

The storm hit, and we were right in the middle of the red on the radar. My dad, my uncle and one of the campers worked together to hold up the tarp pole. The rest of us huddled together, and I prayed silently.

After a little while, the storm slowed down and some ducks came out. I was so happy and thanked the Lord for calming the storm.

Now we camp on that same beautiful island every year. God has a really big plan for us!

Rachel F., 11, Middlebury, Vermont

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TRUTH pursuer

Proverbs 15:9

Look to the Birds

by Linda Holloway

What bird can carry the most weight?

A crane. *Ha!*

Actually, the great horned owl (which may weigh nearly 6 pounds) can grab and fly away with an animal that weighs around 10 pounds. Now that's impressive.

God designed an eye-popping variety of birds on the fifth day of Creation. The Bible mentions birds more than 300 times. The Holy Spirit even came down at Jesus' baptism in the form of a gentle dove (Luke 3:22).

So look to the birds and see what you can learn about life . . . and God.

FLIGHTLESS, NOT DEFENSELESS

God told Job that the ostrich "proudly spreads her wings" (Job 39:18).

The ostrich is one of the fastest animals on land. Though its wings aren't designed to fly, they help it to run over 40 mph. The ostrich uses its wings like rudders on a boat to change direction at high speeds.

Ostriches often run from danger, but God also gave the ostrich a long claw on each foot. If the bird is cornered, it can kick out its claw to protect itself.

God designed the ostrich's wings, legs, and claws with purpose. He designed you with a purpose, too. Like the ostrich, you are custom-made by God.

ABUNDANTLY BLESSED

Is there any bird prettier than a peacock? King Solomon imported peacocks to show off his great wealth (1 Kings 10:22). Their exotic beauty was rare and valuable.

For much of his life, King Solomon lived to please God. He wanted wisdom instead of wealth, and God blessed him with both. But he didn't always use wisdom. When Solomon foolishly followed other gods, even his wealth couldn't make him happy.

Disobedience to God wastes your blessings. Beauty, like wealth, fades. Obedience is always in fashion, just like a peacock's feather, because it shows God your love.

WINGS OF PROTECTION

The Old Testament refers to wings as a place of protection. The Psalms say that God will "cover you with His feathers" and give you "refuge under His wings" (Psalm 91:4).

Jesus also used the image of a protective bird in the New Testament (Matthew 23:37). He said He wanted to protect the people of Jerusalem like a mother hen gathering her young. When she sees danger, the hen warns her chicks with a cluck and covers them with her body and wings for protection.

Jesus longs for His people to run to Him when dangers arise or they don't know what to do. Stay close to Jesus though prayer, Bible study and worship. If you've asked Him into your heart, He's as close to you as a protective mother hen.

ALL PHOTOS © THINKSTOCK

SOARING EAGLES

Isaiah 40:31 tells us that when we trust in the Lord we can travel through our lives like soaring eagles.

The eagle is among the biggest and strongest birds in the sky. Eagles make flight look effortless as they soar with less energy than it takes to flap their wings. God designed them to sail on the wind up to 10,000 feet in the air.

The eagle depends on strong winds to carry it, just like we depend on God's might for our daily lives. God gives us the power to soar through life. We don't have to flap our "wings" like crazy to reach the heights because God is mighty and reliable.

CAREFREE AS A BIRD

In Matthew 6:26, Jesus instructs His followers to "look at the birds of the sky: They don't sow or reap or gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Aren't you worth more than they?" Hint: The answer is *yes!*

If God provides for the daily needs of birds, how much more does He care about your life? The birds teach us not to worry because God takes care of us.

BIRDS ON THE MOVE

God told the prophet Jeremiah, "The dove, the swift and the thrush observe the time of their migration" (Jeremiah 8:7, NIV).

The Lord knew His people had seen birds flying overhead for years. The world's second largest bird migration flies over where His people lived. More than 500 million birds travel over Israel from Europe and Asia to Africa for the winter. Then, in the spring, they return home to nest and raise chicks.

Bird scientists, called ornithologists, can't explain how birds know to stay on course year after year. But we can: God gave them the instinct to follow those routes.

Like a bird in migration, you can know where to go and what God requires of you by spending time in His Word. His Holy Spirit will help you understand, guide you and keep you on course.

LOOK TO THE SKY

When you need to remember that God designed you uniquely, think of the ostrich or the migration patterns of the birds. When you feel worried or worthless, remember how He cares for the smallest birds. And when you need His protection and strength, remember the mother hen and the powerful eagle.

God has filled the sky with reminders of how much He cares for you. You just need to look up!

FASHION STATEMENT

by Sherry Hyle

Smell nice, wear Smell Nice.

Are you making good choices when it comes to your personal style? Answer True or False to each statement and follow the arrows to find out.

START

I wear the same pair of jeans all week.
TRUE FALSE

I wash my hair often, brush my teeth and try to smell nice.
TRUE FALSE

I try to dress like my favorite celebrity.
TRUE FALSE

My parents are comfortable with my clothing choices.
TRUE FALSE

I'd rather eat worms than dress up for a special occasion.
TRUE FALSE

Need, ack! T-shirt.

They are also comfortable wearing super hero costumes.

I have no idea what size I wear.
TRUE FALSE

I wear, uh ... size normal, uh size average?

I wear clothes that fit just right, instead of too baggy or tight.
TRUE FALSE

I hide clothes in my backpack and change once I get to school.
TRUE FALSE

I'm happy with the way God made me.
TRUE FALSE

My favorite shoes have holes in them, but I still wear them to school.
TRUE FALSE

I wish I could wear pajamas to church.
TRUE FALSE

I hate how certain parts of my body look.
TRUE FALSE

I know which colors look good on me.
TRUE FALSE

My mom still picks out my clothes every morning.
TRUE FALSE

I take good care of my skin.
TRUE FALSE

I try to wear the same brands my friends do.
TRUE FALSE

This coat is a Joey Wombat, the most famous designer in Australia.

I won't wear a coat if it clashes with my outfit.
TRUE FALSE

The cold never bothered me anyway.

There's my wittle pumky-wumpkin.

UNIQUELY YOU

You care about how you look and keep up a pleasing appearance. You don't go overboard when it comes to shopping, and you have a style all your own. Most importantly, you know that true beauty comes from God.

"You knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made." –Psalm 139:13-14, ESV

TRAPPED BY TRENDS

You love to shop and follow the latest fashions. Be careful not to compare yourself with others or pull your friends into bad choices. Instead, take confidence in the body God gave you.

"And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." –Colossians 3:17

TRY HARDER

You might not care about your appearance, but other people do. Your sloppy choices disrespect those around you. Make an effort to wash your clothes and your body. Go shopping with some friends or your parents and ask them to help you find a comfortable style. You'll be amazed at how great you feel!

"Make yourself an example of good works." –Titus 2:7

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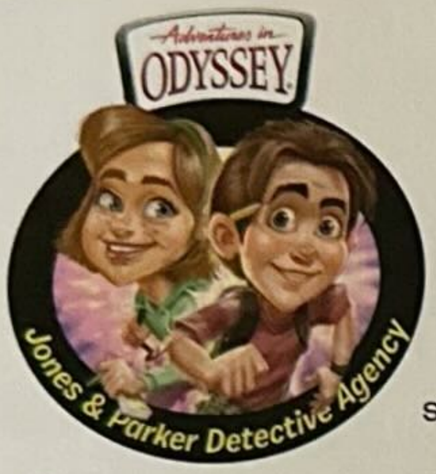


OUT OF ODOR

by Christopher P.N. Maselli

An Emily Jones Solve-It-Yourself Mystery

When a football player raises a stink about being fined, can Emily and Matthew clear the air?

Detectives often have a "sense" that something is fishy. And that was the sense Matthew had the moment we walked into the car rental shop—literally.

"Something smells fishy," he whispered in my ear.

A huge man saw us walk in and quickly extended his hand. "Thanks for coming," QB Joe said. The two-time division-winning quarterback had flown in to speak at an Odyssey High School assembly.

Matthew grabbed the 6-foot-3, 235-pound quarterback's hand and immediately winced in pain. When QB Joe let go, Matthew looked wide-eyed at his near-crushed hand with two indentions from Joe's championship rings.

"Nice to meet you, QB Joe," I said with a curtsey to avoid shaking hands. "So how did you hear about us?"

"I found your card at the high school," the quarterback explained. "And now I'm in need of your services."

"See, Em," Matthew said. "I told you advertising would be a good idea."

I ignored my sidekick. "So what's the problem?" I asked.

QB Joe pointed at the hybrid hatchback beside him. The small black car glistened under the late afternoon sun.

I grabbed the driver-side door handle and pulled, but it was locked. Looking closer, I realized there wasn't even a keyhole—just a silver handle with a few scratches behind it. "How do you get into this thing?"

QB Joe's face lit up. "It's high-tech! The key has to be *near* the door. Phil the rental guy has it. But you don't want to open it."

"Why not?"

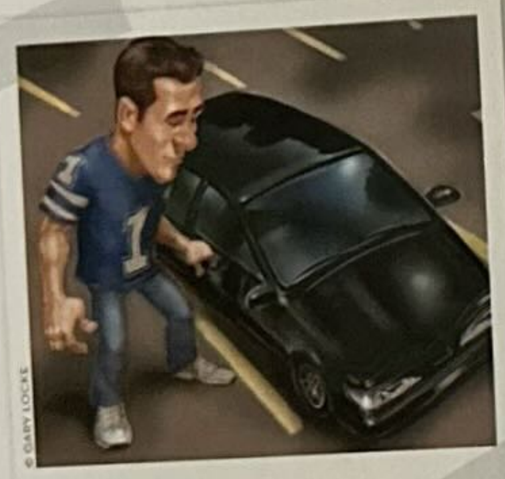
"It stinks," he said. "Bad. That's why I called you. They claim I stunk it up. But QB Joe doesn't stink! In fact, I don't think this is the car I drove. They have dozens of these black hybrids, and I'm not paying to deodorize it unless they can prove this was the car I rented."

Matthew was still rubbing his hand. "Maybe we should check to see if the steering wheel is crushed."

I gave him a that's-not-helpful look. "Let's start with what type of smell we're dealing with."

Just then the door to the rental shop opened and "Phil the rental guy" exited. "Well," he said, "I double-checked. This is definitely the car you drove. The license plates match."

"That doesn't prove anything," QB Joe said. "You could have switched license plates when I was inside, or you could have changed the paperwork. You can't make me pay $50 for deodorizing."



I stared at QB Joe. "This argument is over $50?"

"It's the principle of the thing," he said with clenched fists. "Nobody says QB Joe stinks!"

"Can you open the car?" I asked Phil.

Phil pushed a button on a key chain remote. This time when I grabbed the handle, the door opened. An odor exploded out, causing us all to stumble back.

"*Nasty!*" I shouted, holding my nose.

"Ugh! It's horrible," Matthew said. "I knew I smelled something fishy. That's definitely fried fish with a tinge of vinegar."

"Did you eat in your car?" I asked QB Joe. "Maybe some cheap seafood?"

QB Joe shrugged. "All I had was a small lunch. Four bacon cheeseburgers, two chili cheese fries, two milkshakes and a diet cola—because I need to cut back on calories."

As the funk in the air dissipated, I said, "OK, the only way to solve this case is for Matthew to smell QB Joe."

"Why me?" Matthew objected.

"I'm a girl," I said. "It'd be inappropriate."

I nudged Matthew. "C'mon. Smell QB Joe. If he smells like fish, then we'll know the odor came from him. Case closed."

Matthew let out a long breath. "*Fine.*"

He slowly walked toward QB Joe. The quarterback stepped back. Matthew looked dejected. A detective's job isn't always pretty.

"Sorry, QB Joe," Matthew said. "I need to gather the evidence."

Matthew took a deep sniff and then retreated.

"Well?" I asked.

Matthew paused, then said: "He smells like a sweet, fruity musk with a splash of cedar wood and sage. Sweat, too."

"Hmm," I said. "Now compare that to the smell of the car."

"No fruity musk in there. Just fish and vinegar."

"I told you I don't stink," QB Joe said. "I'm innocent."

Matthew wanted to vindicate QB Joe right then, but I had one more test. I left the scene, and returned with a can of diet cola that I handed to QB Joe.

"You must be hot," I said. "Drink this soda."

"Thanks," he said, popping it open and guzzling it down.

I pulled Matthew aside. "Stay close to QB Joe," I whispered. "If he burps and it smells like fish, we'll know he's been lying. If not, he's innocent."

Matthew grabbed his hair with both hands. "I don't like this plan, Em!"

"This is just to be sure," I said.

As the quarterback finished his last gulp, I could hear his stomach rumble. I pushed Matthew between myself and QB Joe and announced, "I can prove who drove this car last."

MYSTERY DECODER

Go to **ClubhouseMagazine.com** and click on the **Jones & Parker** icon to find Matthew's decoder #2014-09, so you can decode this message that fills in this blank: According to Paul, we are the _____.

COIOAHMSFRRAT

Did QB Joe drive the stinky car ?

What were the clues?

Turn to page 19 to read the solution!

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High Voltage

by Adam Holz

DEAR PLUGGED IN: What do you think about the movie *Heaven Is For Real*?

Rose N., 11, Munford, Tennessee

What happens when we die? Christians believe people who have placed their faith in Jesus spend eternity with Him in heaven. Based on the bestselling book, the movie *Heaven Is For Real* explores one Christian boy's story of what heaven might be like.

In the movie, 4-year-old Colton Burpo nearly dies during surgery. When he wakes up, he talks about going to heaven, seeing Jesus and meeting relatives who have died. His father, Todd, struggles to make sense of Colton's story, even though he's a preacher.

Heaven Is For Real deals with some really important ideas. Some we find in the Bible: Jesus is there, and the scars on His hands and feet show that He was crucified and rose from the dead. What the movie doesn't address, however, is why someone goes to heaven—through faith in Jesus.

In addition, some Christians question the movie's premise that a person can go to heaven and come back to talk about it. I'd recommend you watch this faith-focused movie with your parents, so you can discuss Colton's vision of heaven together.

• • •

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

—John 3:16 (ESV)

Heaven is a popular topic. It turns up in movies, music, TV and video games. Often, people think they'll go to heaven because they're basically good. The Bible, though, teaches that sin separates us from God. We need forgiveness for all our lies and wrongdoings. That's what Jesus provided on the Cross. He died to forgive our sins and give us eternal life when we believe in Him.

Heaven *is* for real, but we can't earn our way there, no matter how hard we try. Instead, we must place our faith in Jesus, accepting the gift of salvation He alone offers.

DEAR PLUGGED IN: What do you think of the popular Xbox One game *Titanfall*? Are there any parts I should avoid?

Joshua K., 10, Rancho Santa Margarita, California

In *Titanfall*, players pilot 24-foot-tall robots packed with customizable weapons and battle on a distant planet. The game's action-packed combat prompted one reviewer to call it "the most addictive game ever." That's the first red flag.

Like many M-rated combat games, *Titanfall* features lots of blood and gore as you stomp on, blow up and shoot at the other pilots. Characters use really harsh language, and if you connect via headset with other human players, the profanity usually gets worse in the heat of battle.

Remember, "Mature" games like this one are the equivalent of R-rated movies. They're full of images kids shouldn't see and words they shouldn't hear. A lot of the content in *Titanfall* isn't even appropriate for adults!

So, to answer your question, Joshua, there's a lot to avoid here—like, all of it.

Got an entertainment question?

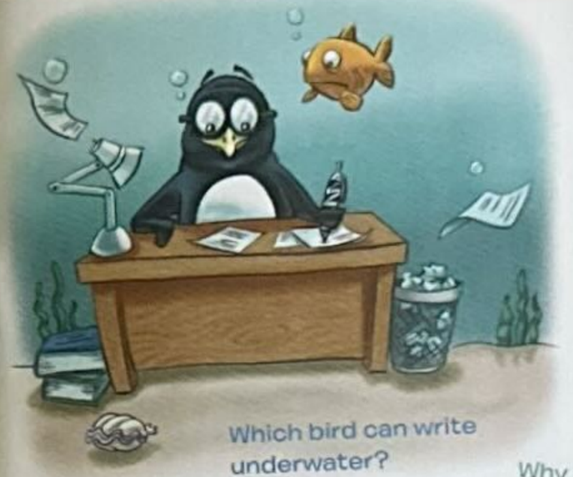
Send it to:

"High Voltage," *Clubhouse* magazine, 8605 Explorer Dr., Colorado Springs, CO 80920. In Canada, mail it to Focus on the Family, 19946 80A Ave., Langley, BC V2Y 0J8.

Parents can find out what's in movies, music, TV shows and video games by visiting Focus on the Family's **pluggedin.com**.

Adam Holz

***Clubhouse** welcomes **Adam Holz**, our new "High Voltage" writer. We also want to thank **Bob Smithouser**—the new Odyssey Adventure Club producer—for his years of awesome advice in this column.*



U Joke

Which bird can write underwater?

A ballpoint penguin.

Reagan K., 9, Pflugerville, Texas

Why did the boy eat his homework?

His teacher said it was a piece of cake.

Josiah S., 11, Indianapolis, Indiana

What has 18 legs and catches flies?

A baseball team.

Tessa B., 10, Danville, California

Noah: There's a snake that's bigger than Daddy.

Justice: Oh yeah, how many feet is it?

Noah: Snakes don't have feet!

Justice B., 9, Falls Church, Virginia

Why did the sun *not* go to college?

It already has a million degrees.

Abby W., 7, South Riding, Virginia

How do you survive a shipwreck?

Use a bar of soap and wash yourself ashore.

Jared P., 11, Arborg, Manitoba

Knock, knock.

Who's there?

Figs.

Figs who?

Figs the doorbell, it's broken.

Sarah W., 13, Fountain Valley, California

What did the glue say to the pencil on the first day of school?

"Just stick with me!"

Keturah K., 10, Kewaskum, Wisconsin

What is a beaver's favorite snack?

Wood chips.

Joshua P., 7
Woodbury, Minnesota

Which ship is easy to make but takes a lifetime to maintain?

A friendship.

Abigail C., 12, Romulus, Michigan

What is a chick's favorite car?

Jeep, jeep!

Emma C., 11, Mesa, Arizona

In which direction does a sneeze fly?

At-choo!

Jeremy W., 12
San Dimas, California

Why did the clown go to the doctor?

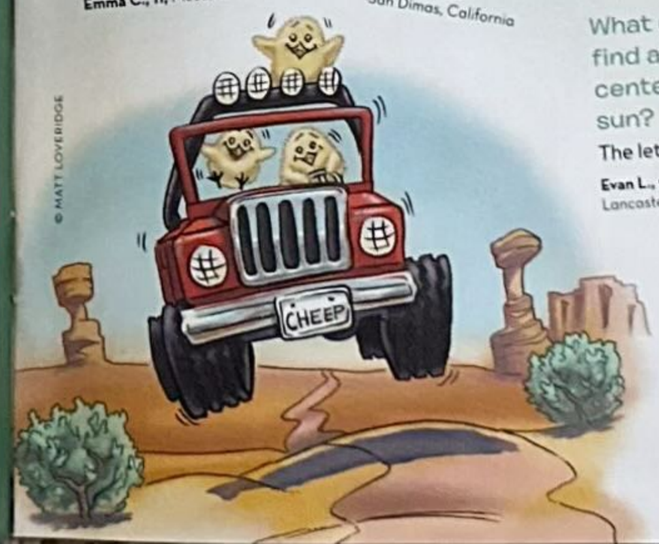
He felt funny.

Annakate H., 11
Newark, Delaware

What do you call a cow that eats grass?

A lawn-moo-er.

Esther B., 12, Vernon, Connecticut



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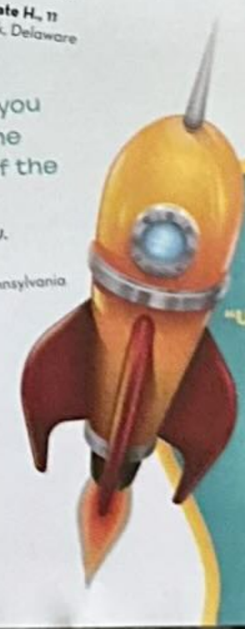
What do you find at the center of the sun?

The letter U.

Evan L., 9
Lancaster, Pennsylvania



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HEAD IN THE CLOUDS

Explore the science of storms and clouds.

by Kathleen Freeman

Maddie Science here, in search of some major science secrets. I've taken to the sky—maybe a bit too high, yikes!—to bring you an exclusive interview with clouds. Say hello to **cirrus, stratus** and **cumulonimbus.**

CIRRUS: Thanks, Maddie. Welcome to the *troposphere!*

MADDIE: That's the lowest level of the atmosphere, extending 11 to 12 miles upward, right?

CUMULONIMBUS: Yep. The troposphere contains 99 percent of the atmosphere's water vapor. You can't have clouds without water.

MADDIE: OK, so if there's no water in the layers above you, the vapor must come from below.

STRATUS: Great deduction! It's all part of the water cycle. The sun heats up the surface of oceans and lakes, causing water to *evaporate.*

CIRRUS: Water also evaporates off of leaves. We love trees!

STRATUS: The evaporated water travels up to the troposphere, where some of it cools—or *condenses*—back to a liquid or frozen state.

CIRRUS: Clouds are part gas, part liquid. It's a special mixture called an *aerosol,* just like hair spray or whipped cream.

MADDIE: Interesting. What causes the last step, *precipitation?*

CUMULONIMBUS: Density. Gases such as water vapor spread out their mass across a big space. Liquids, on the other hand, concentrate that mass into tightly packed droplets. When the droplets get too heavy, they fall out of clouds as rain, snow or hail, depending on temperature.

MADDIE: Like it says in Zechariah 10:1—"The LORD makes the rain clouds, and He will give them showers."

STRATUS: What a refreshing verse! Of course, even without rain, we clouds keep you cool.

CIRRUS: That's right. Since we're white, we reflect sunlight—and the heat that goes with it—back into the upper atmosphere.

CUMULONIMBUS: Meanwhile, storm clouds absorb sunlight, giving us a gray and gloomy color.

MADDIE: *Hmmm,* what else makes you different from each other?

STRATUS: How about shape? Stratus clouds stretch across the sky like a fuzzy blanket. We mostly form in the lower troposphere and can even drift down to the mountaintops.

MADDIE: Like fog?

STRATUS: Yep. Stratus clouds are real down-to-earth and friendly. While other clouds grow upward, we're so heavy that we grow down. Without a boost of warm air, stratus clouds can't get very far off the ground.

MADDIE: What about you, cirrus?

CIRRUS: We look more like giant feathers. Cirrus clouds sail high, at least 3 miles up in the sky. Our wisps are made of delicate ice crystals.

MADDIE: Does that make you responsible for snow?

CIRRUS: Sadly, no. We don't make much precipitation at all.

MADDIE: So which clouds look like puffy white cotton balls?

CUMULONIMBUS: You're thinking of my cousins—cumulus clouds. They're light and breezy, floating in fun shapes through the lower troposphere.

MADDIE: Clouds have cousins?

STRATUS: We have moms, too. Mother clouds are clouds that form in clear skies. As conditions change, the clouds sometimes change as well.

MADDIE: That makes sense.

CUMULONIMBUS: Like my cumulus cousins, I have a puffy base. But I'm pretty wild. Nimbus clouds gather—or accumulate—to form huge storm clouds that can reach thousands of feet into the air.

MADDIE: Just seeing your anvil-like shape in the sky makes people run for cover.

CUMULONIMBUS: That's smart, Maddie. Unlike stratus and cirrus clouds, I'm very unstable. My storms only last about 20 minutes, but I can bring lightning, flash floods or even tornadoes!

MADDIE: Some folks say they can "feel" a storm coming. Is that true?

CUMULONIMBUS: It's possible. Thunderstorms form when low-pressure systems crash into high-pressure systems. The air gets all stirred up, piling clouds on top of each other. God gave animals the ability to sense the pressure change as an early warning to find shelter.

CIRRUS: Meteorologists—scientists who study weather, not meteors—measure these pressure changes with a *barometer.*

MADDIE: You clouds travel all over the world. Any favorite spots?

STRATUS: We can't form without plenty of water vapor. We also like a mix of hot and cold temperatures, so spring and fall are our peak seasons.

CIRRUS: And the mix of high- and low-pressure systems means lots of clouds can be found near the equator and the 50th parallel.

MADDIE: Just to clarify, the 50th parallel is a line of latitude. Cities near 50° N include Winnipeg and Vancouver. Rainy Seattle is a few degrees south.

STRATUS: It's all the same to us. Like it says in Matthew 5:45, God "sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous."

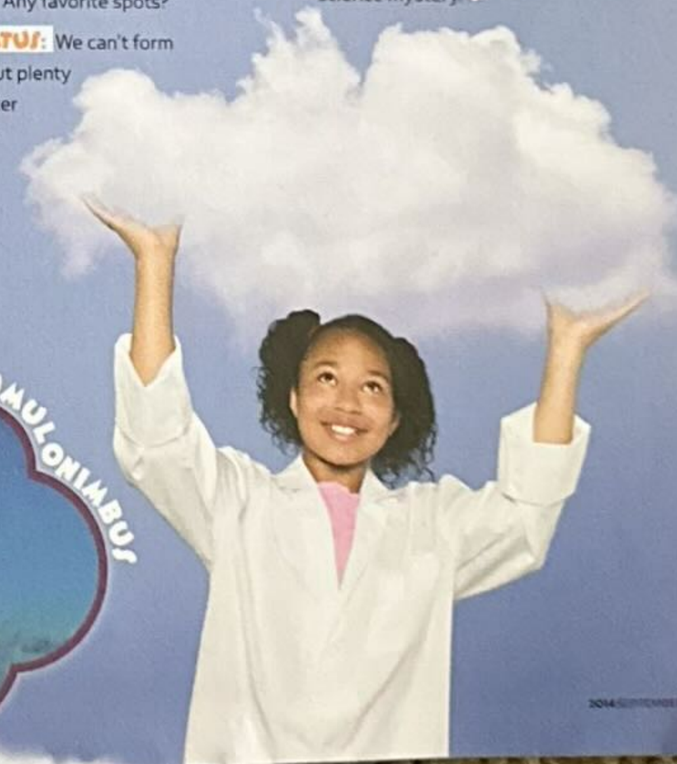
MADDIE: Any other secrets you want to float by me?

CUMULONIMBUS: Well, inside every cloud, you'll find—

CIRRUS: *Shh!* Don't tell her that. It will freak her out.

STRATUS: Come on, cirrus. She won't mind a little bacteria.

MADDIE: There are bacteria in clouds, too? Those guys are everywhere! Well, that's it for me, science fans. I'll be back soon to uncloud another science mystery.



ILLUSIONS © GARY HANSEN / CLOUDS & BALLOON © THINKSTOCK

adventures of
AVERAGE BOY
by Bob Smiley as told to Bob Smiley

Raccoon Ruckus

"No one move," Dad whispered.

"It's moving," I said. "Maybe the raccoon didn't understand you. Say it louder."

The raccoon didn't give Dad a chance to say anything. It scampered toward us. Not only was it disobeying my father, but it caused my mom to do the same. She screamed and jumped on the coffee table!

Every Labor Day, my family goes "Mom camping." We call it that because Mom has a different idea of camping than us boys. She likes to "camp" in a hotel room near a Chick-fil-A.

This year we compromised. Dad booked a cabin at Lake Cheapovacation near a chicken farm. The first sign this was a bad idea came when we checked in. Most hotels have automatic doors, but I had to manually open this one. Also, most doors don't fall off when you touch them.

"Wow! I really am getting stronger," I said, holding the screen door.

The manager came out to apologize.

"That's on my fix-it list, right after I get to the pool," he said.

"Is the pool broken?" I asked.

"Naw, we don't have a pool. But I plan on digging one someday."

Dad gave him our reservation number. This should've been our second warning. It was No. 1. We were the only ones staying there!

The manager handed us our room key. Then he threw in a free bottle of bug spray and a wooden stick.

"What's the stick for?" I asked.

"In case you have to scare away critters," he joked.

At least, we thought he was joking. When my brother opened the closet in our cabin, we realized the manager doesn't kid around.

So there we were, Mom on the table and the rest of us standing on the bed. The raccoon slowly crept toward Mom.

"Where's the stick?" I shouted.

We all looked at the stick . . . including the raccoon.

Now I'd like to stop and remind everyone that hitting a living creature with a stick is very cruel. I know this because I was hit several times.

Being a superhero, I jumped off the bed. Unfortunately, the raccoon was closer. It grabbed the stick and started swinging it at me. I took off running toward the front door. The raccoon followed. Once we were outside, the raccoon ran up a tree. I guess it thought it was a good idea when I did it first.

"Good job!" Mom shouted.

"Uh, yeah," I said as the raccoon hit me with the stick. "My plan worked just like I thought it would."

The rest of our trip was a blast. I learned how to patch a hole in a closet and that roaches aren't affected by bug spray.

All in all, it was a great time with my family. Now if you will excuse me, I've got to go get some medicine for my legs. I also learned that biting ants live in trees!

Devotions for Super Average Kids: Book 2
features all-new Average Boy adventures, plus practical tips and biblical wisdom to help you live an extraordinary life. (And it's funny, too!)
Buy it at AverageBoy.org.

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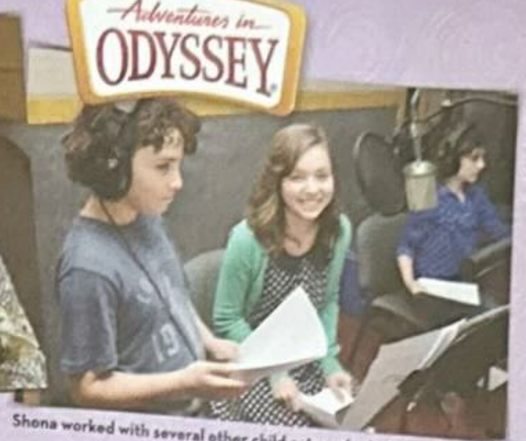
Adventures in ODYSSEY

Katie Leigh, who plays Connie, was glad to see her "sis" back in the studio.



Shona worked with several other child actors she hadn't met before.

ON the SHOW with SHONA

Shona K. returns as Connie Kendall's sister in the latest Odyssey adventures. by Jesse Florea

"Shona?"

The teen heard her name and looked around. Staring at her from one of the seats at LifeHouse Theater was a girl she didn't recognize.

"Are you from Adventures in Odyssey?" the girl asked.

Shona smiled big. "Yes, I am!"

* * *

"It was so cool," Shona says about being recognized at a small theater in Redlands, California. "I got to talk to the girl and her mom about the show. They loved the episode I was in and watched all the podcasts."

Nearly two years ago, Shona K. won a nationwide talent search to discover a new voice for Adventures in Odyssey. As the "Get in the Show" winner, Shona showed she was a gem of an actor by bringing to life Jules Kendall—Connie's previously unknown little sister—in the episode "Life Expectancy."

A lot has happened since Shona first appeared on the show, including moving from the mountains of California to Los Angeles.

"So now Jules and I have Los Angeles in common," she says.

The move hasn't been easy, but there have been some highlights.

"We were doing a family Bible study and talking about why God would want us down here and what His plans were for us," Shona remembers. "We had just finished praying when my mom checked her phone and saw an email from Angie [Adventure in Odyssey's coordinator]."

Her mom screamed, "Oh my goodness, you're coming back on Adventures in Odyssey!"

"It was so incredible," Shona says. "I started laughing and crying."

Friends in the Studio

While Shona's return was a surprise to her, it wasn't to Odyssey writer/director Paul McCusker.

"Shona was very good in the studio the first time," Paul says. "But the improvement she has made as an actor in the last year was remarkable. We gave her some very difficult scenes, and she really delivered a great performance."

Her character, Jules, appears in a number of episodes in album 58: *The Ties That Bind*.

"It was wonderful to be back in the studio," Shona says, "to talk with the actors and see everybody. They're so friendly."

At the recording, Shona and her sister, Katriona, started singing with Will Ryan (who plays Eugene Meltsner) in the green room before a taping. Since then, they've played numerous shows with their mom and Will around California.

Shona with her mom and sister

"I would really like to do more voice work and acting," Shona says. "But I'm just going to go where the Lord leads me."

You can purchase *The Ties That Bind* online at **WhitsEnd.org/58**. Or join the Odyssey Adventure Club and you can hear all 14 episodes right now at **OAClub.org**.

"Fulfill my joy
by **thinking** the same way,
having the **same love**,
sharing the same feelings,
focusing on one goal."

–Philippians 2:2

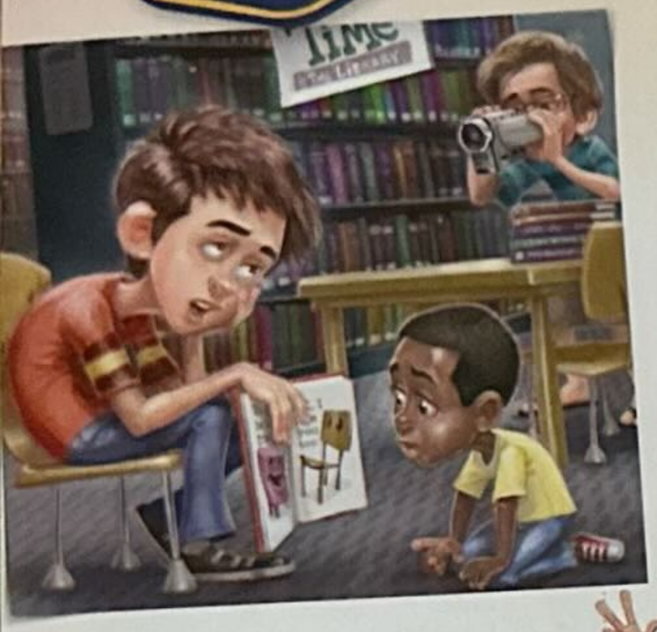
© GARY LOCKE

WHIT'S END

Adventures in ODYSSEY

CLUB HOUSE

ODYSSEY ADVENTURE CLUB NEWS



Verse of the Month

"But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us—not by works of righteousness that we had done, but according to His mercy." —*Titus 3:4-5*

We can't earn our way into heaven. Yet the Bible still tells us to do good deeds and show kindness to others. That's probably because kindness is part of God's character, so He wants His children to be kind, too. Use what's left of summer to show kindness to as many people as you can.

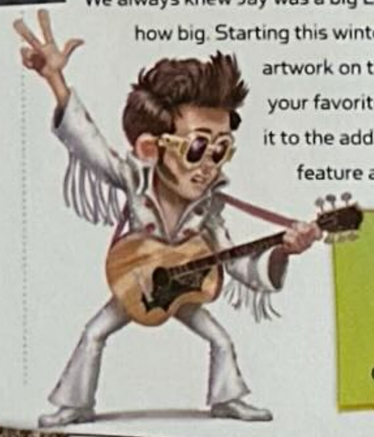
Odyssey on Demand

We hope you enjoyed being the first to hear all 14 episodes of album 58: *The Ties That Bind*. What a great story! Were you able to unmask the Perilous Pen? And how about that shocker in the finale? As a Club member, you get to enjoy all 58 albums whenever you like. And soon each of the 17 animated Adventures in Odyssey movies will be part of the Club as well. **Look for a new one every Friday** . . . all month long!

Jay's in Trouble . . . Again

When a video shoot at Whit's End goes horribly wrong, Jay and Brian find themselves in Mr. Whittaker's debt. How will they repay him? The answer: Thirty acts of kindness to the people of Odyssey—one every day for an entire month! Will they do a good job or make more trouble? Find out in the exclusive Odyssey Adventure Club episode "Thirty Jays Hath September." Listen at **OAClub.org**.

WANTED: ARTISTS!



We always knew Jay was a big Elvis fan. This illustration shows how big. Starting this winter, we could be admiring your artwork on this page! Just draw a picture of your favorite Odyssey character and send it to the address below. Each issue will feature a drawing by a Club member.

Mail it to:

Odyssey Adventure Club
Attn: Character Art
8605 Explorer Dr.
Colorado Springs, CO 80920

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Adventures in ODYSSEY PUZZLES

Eugene's Mystery Math Squares

Complete the grid so that each row and column contains every digit from 1 to 6. The numbers in each shaded area combine to produce the total shown using a specific mathematical operation (+, −, ×, ÷). For example, 5- could be 6 and 1 or 1 and 6, since 6 - 1 = 5. If there's just a number, write in that number.

Have fun!

For the solution and additional puzzles, check out **ClubhouseMagazine.com** and click on the Jones & Parker icon.

. . . continued from page 9

Solution to

OUT OF ODOR:

An Emily Jones Solve-It-Yourself Mystery

QB Joe belched. Matthew's eyes crossed as he fell to the ground.

"Guilty!" he cried.

Fish and vinegar filled the air.

"I just couldn't resist Seven Seas," QB Joe said, hanging his head. "But I don't stink. How'd you know it was me?"

"The scratches," I said. "Each time you grabbed the handle to open the car door, your huge rings scratched at the paint." I pointed to the area behind the driver's side handle. "I noticed these when we first came in."

"Thanks, kids," Phil said. "Now I just need to try to get rid of that odor."

QB Joe sighed and pulled out a wad of cash. He peeled off $50 and handed it to Phil.

"Next time I'll know better than to call these detectives," QB Joe said. "I thought for sure since they were kids they wouldn't be able to prove anything."

"Never underestimate kids," I said proudly with another curtsey. Then I added, "You'll probably need to pay for the scratches, too."

"And therapy," Matthew said from the ground. "Lots of aroma therapy." ■

—*by Christopher P. N. Maselli*

Biblical evidence:

"Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity."

–1 Timothy 4:12, NIV

Stinky Search

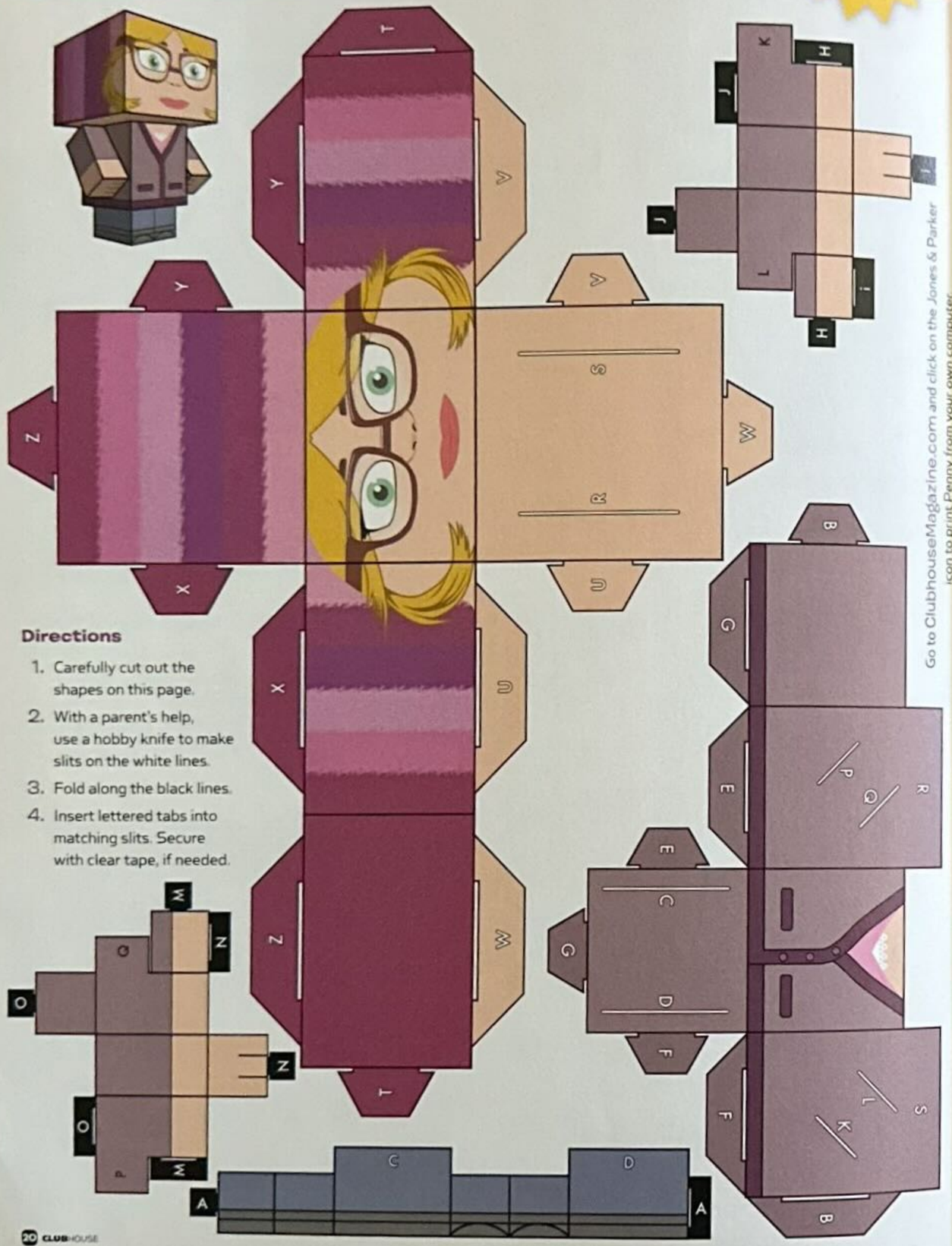
Look up, down, across, backward and diagonally to find seven sets of smelly objects in this order:

To learn more about *Adventures in Odyssey*, go to **WhitsEnd.org**

Adventures in ODYSSEY

Cut-and-Fold Penny

Cut-and-Fold Camilla coming in November!



Directions

1. Carefully cut out the shapes on this page.
2. With a parent's help, use a hobby knife to make slits on the white lines.
3. Fold along the black lines.
4. Insert lettered tabs into matching slits. Secure with clear tape, if needed.

Go to ClubhouseMagazine.com and click on the Jones & Parker icon to print Penny from your own computer.

Grace overflowing

Christian singer and songwriter Jamie Grace sees God's grace as she overcomes obstacles in her life.

by Jesse Florea

"Loser!" somebody yelled.

"What's wrong with you?" a boy said as he walked by, bumping into Jamie's shoulder.

Looking at Jamie Grace now and seeing her sing on stage, you'd never guess that she was the girl being picked on at school. Church wasn't much better.

"Kids were always picking on me," Jamie says. "But being the loner, and being the kid that didn't fit in, you've got to have something to do with your time. For me, I turned to music."

And when she turned to music, music helped turn her into the person God created her to be. ▸▸▸

Jamie (left) as a baby with her family

"I started to play songs and write songs and discover who I was," Jamie says. "Ultimately, my identity is in Christ. But in a good way, I started to find part of my identity in music. I learned how to express myself. Music's just a huge part of who I am."

Today, Jamie can be found playing in front of 20,000-seat arenas. Her first two albums, *One Song at a Time* and *Ready to Fly*, have climbed the charts. She was nominated for a Grammy Award and took home the 2012 Dove Award for New Artist of the Year.

Not bad for a 22-year-old who was diagnosed with Tourette's syndrome and other disorders growing up. Tourette's shows itself in uncontrollable movements or outbursts of sound. These "tics" often repeat themselves. So Jamie stood out . . . and not in a good way. Other kids noticed and called her names.

"I'm 100 percent against the word *retard*," Jamie says, "because I know firsthand how much it hurts. Even being called words like *stupid* or *idiot*. I don't know why kids say it—there are probably tons of different reasons—but on the other end of it, it hurts so much. I'm a really big advocate for showing kids how to respect each other and show the love of Jesus."

We caught up with Jamie in the midst of her crazy schedule to find out how God pulled her through the hard times. Here's what she had to say.

CLUBHOUSE: You dealt with a lot of challenges growing up, but your music is so upbeat and hopeful. Where does that joy come from?

JAMIE: When I was going through something hard from school or with friends growing up—and even now—I had so much hope and positivity around me. My parents, my sister, Morgan, and my grandparents all instilled hope in my life, encouraged me and read me Scriptures. A lot of it, too, is that I was shown how to live a life where you have hope in Jesus. So my music just represents how I was raised and represents what was instilled in me at a young age.

Because you didn't have a lot of friends growing up, what did you do for fun?

Jamie and her older sister, Morgan

Fortunately, I have a big sister and we're really close. So we hung out a lot. I had a few friends here and there, and we'd hang out after church. But to be honest, I spent a lot of time by myself. In the midst of that, I felt very lonely. But looking back I realize how much I learned in that time. I don't think it's healthy to ever be by yourself all the time. But those quiet times are really cool times to talk to Jesus, learn new things about Him, to read the Word of God and to write songs or poetry about Him.

You're a self-taught musician on six different instruments. Take us into your house during your early years.

I grew up in a home where my

© KERRY MCPHEETERS

mom sings and my dad plays drums. My dad never played a lot because he's a full-time pastor. But I knew he played, and I knew he was good. My mom's dad loves to play a ton of instruments. He's the first person who gave me a drum set. He and my dad showed me a couple of beats here and there.

With your dad as a pastor, were your first performances in church?

Yeah. One of the first ones that I remember was at Stone Mountain, [Georgia], which is where our church is. I sang Janet Paschol's "Born Again" when I was 5 or 6. I love southern gospel. I sang that song at Stone Mountain, at our church and if my mom was singing somewhere. My mom traveled and sang a little bit when I was growing up, so I'd go with her. I had my one song that I'd sing, then my sister and I would do something together.

Your new album starts with the song "Beautiful Day," but you're not talking about sunshine and birds chirping. So what makes a beautiful day?

What makes it a beautiful day is what it says in the book of Psalms, "This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it."

Sometimes we wake up and everything is going great at school. Everything's awesome at home. And that's a beautiful day. But sometimes we wake up and realize we didn't do so great on a test or our family is not having the best time or our friends aren't treating us that great. And, it sounds crazy, but that's still a beautiful day.

Ultimately, the day is beautiful because it's one that God gave to us. We have to choose to focus on Him and think about Him and all the awesome things that He's done in the midst of the things that might not feel so great. Because even when it's raining outside, even when it feels like the sky's falling, He's still our refuge, and He's still the one we should run to.

You talk a lot about respect. Why is that so important?

We should strive to be like Christ. Jesus is the ultimate example of someone who was selfless, thought of other people and who cared

Hamming it up for the camera: brother-in-law Patrick, Morgan, Mom, Dad and Jamie

PHOTOS COURTESY OF JAMIE'S FAMILY

about people. When you think about respect, that's what it is—it's caring about other people and appreciating them for what they're good at.

School's starting this month for a lot of our readers. You were home-schooled and went to college at age 16. Was school easy for you or were you just really focused on your studies?

I have Tourette's syndrome, ADHD, OCD and anxiety disorder. So school was awesome—uh, no! Actually, I loved school, but it was definitely a challenge. Things didn't come as easily to me as they did to my friends. I would learn things and quickly forget them. So I had a tutor. And at one point I did get held back. I was two years ahead, so it wasn't necessarily "held back," but it was still difficult not getting to move forward in school. Homework assignments that took 30 minutes were going to take me an hour. That was just a part of my life. So I had to make some sacrifices and not play as many sports or do as many extra activities. But at the end of the day, it's about doing your best and working hard. It pleases God when we do our best with what He's given us. ■

© LEE STALSWORTH

Go to **CLUBHOUSEMAGAZINE.COM** to read more of our interview with Jamie.

FISHING FOR TROUBLE

JASON'S FEUD WITH LAUREN SET OFF A TIDAL WAVE OF DIRTY TRICKS.

BY RICK BARRY | ART BY TURE EKROOS

"Do you ever feel like you're living in an opposite-aquarium?" Brody asked, clinging to the top of the rope in gym class.

"What do you mean?" Jason replied.

Brody nodded toward a giant grouper that hovered just outside the glass dome. For a moment, the boys felt like zoo animals.

"At a normal aquarium, humans fill glass tanks with water and stare at the fish," Brody said. "But since BURP is underwater, the fish stare at us. It's creepy."

Jason had to agree that life at the Bioform Underwater Research Platform (better known as BURP) was nothing like his old school. For one thing, the science classes were much harder. For another, everyone lived together in a high-tech marine base at the bottom of the Pacific Ocean.

"Attention, students." Professor Plankton's voice blared over the loudspeaker. "Please review the new duty roster. We must all work together to keep BURP neat and clean."

"That figures," Jason said. "We're miles below the surface, but we still have chores."

The boys left the Recreation Dome and entered the main corridor. A giant screen stretched down the hall, displaying the latest news.

"Ew, scraping barnacles again?" Brody groaned.

Jason waited for his name to appear. At last, the words scrolled across the screen. *Replace air filters—Jason Fisher.*

That's not too bad, he thought.

The screen continued: *. . . and Lauren Giles.*

"I got stuck with the class know-it-all?!?" Jason shouted. He hadn't meant to be so loud.

Lauren's head popped out of the crowd. She glared at him, her cheeks red hot.

"Trade jobs with me," Jason begged Brody. "Even barnacles are more fun than Lauren!"

Brody shook his head. "Sorry, only Professor Plankton can change the duty roster."

Jason ran to the professor's quarters. As he reached the door, he heard Lauren's voice coming from inside. "You have to let me switch partners!"

Jason fumed. Lauren wanted to get rid of him?

"Absolutely not," Professor Plankton said. "Getting to know each other is half the fun."

STUCK TOGETHER

Jason hardly touched his supper. He couldn't stomach the thought of working with Lauren. But if he failed to complete an assigned duty, he'd get in trouble. He had to come up with a plan.

Wait a second, Jason realized. *I can do it all by myself!*

It only took one person to change an air filter. Sure, the job would take twice as long without a partner, but Jason figured it would be worth the extra effort to escape from Lauren. All he had to do was convince her not to show up.

Jason grabbed his computer and logged onto BURP-chat.

Hey Lauren. You're too smart for such a mindless job. Why don't you sleep in tomorrow? I'll replace the filters by myself. Besides, I can work faster without you. —Jason

It was perfect. Jason closed his laptop and leaned back in his chair, grinning from ear to ear.

Problem solved! he thought.

The next morning, students fanned out to perform their duties. Jason spotted Brody floating above the glass dome, dressed in full scuba gear. He was prying barnacles off of the base's exterior.

That's how you deal with pests, Jason said to himself. *Just get rid of them.*

The ladder was awkward, too big for one person to carry alone. At last, Jason reached the first filter. But when he pulled it out, it looked brand new.

"Don't waste your time," a voice said. "I already replaced that one."

Jason looked down. Lauren stood next to the ladder, a big grin on her face. In her hands she held a pile of old, dusty air filters.

"Hello, Speedy," she said. "I woke up early and finished the job by myself."

She tossed him a clean filter. "Here, you can change the last filter in Sector C. That way, I don't have to lie when the professor asks if we worked together."

Jason dragged the ladder across the base. Lauren followed close behind, waiting for him to ask for help. But there was no way he was going to do that.

After Jason replaced the filter, Lauren grabbed

his arm. "Never embarrass me again," she said, quiet but firm.

"Or what, you'll do my chores?" Jason joked, trying to regain his pride.

Lauren smiled and walked away.

WATER WARS

They were laughing at him. Every time Jason walked by a group of girls, they would burst into giggles. Was it his hair? His shirt? No, he looked the same as usual. There was only one possible explanation.

Lauren.

Jason sat at his desk with his head down. The girls would stop staring eventually. In the meantime, he just had to shut them out.

Jason was so focused on not listening, he didn't hear Brody enter. The boy was red-faced and panting. "Jason, I've been looking for you. You have to see this!"

Brody pulled a piece of paper from his back pocket. It was Jason's school photo. Someone had altered the image to give him huge fish lips. The caption read *Jason Fishface*.

"My sister showed it to me. They're posted all over the girls' dormitory," Brody said.

Jason crumpled up the paper. "Who cares? It's not even funny."

"So you're gonna ignore it?" Brody asked.

Of course not, Jason thought. *I'm gonna get revenge!*

The next morning, Lauren arrived late for school, her hair limp and dripping. Professor Plankton's eyes flicked to the boys' side of the room as he offered Lauren a towel.

"What happened?" Mia whispered.

"Some joker hacked into the fire-safety system and set off the sprinklers in my room." Anger smoldered in Lauren's eyes as she glared at Jason, but he wasn't worried. She had no proof.

Normally, the kids sat together at lunch. But today, boys and girls crowded into tables at opposite ends of the cafeteria. Even Brody's sister refused to sit with the boys. Battle lines had been drawn.

Reese took a big bite of his sandwich and immediately spit it out. "Ugh, seaweed!"

"Somebody replaced my potato chips with shells!" Brody shouted. Other boys groaned and held up sea cucumbers or stinky sardines.

Jason opened his lunchbox cautiously. Everything looked OK: a peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwich (no jellyfish added), an apple and some carrot sticks. He almost felt guilty as he unscrewed the lid to his drink and took a sip.

"Yuck!" he cried, wiping his tongue on his sleeve. "Somebody poured saltwater in here!"

"What's wrong, boys?" Mia said. "Lost your appetites?" The girls laughed and gave each other high-fives.

Reese shook his head. "It's not just between you and Lauren anymore," he whispered to Jason. "Looks like we're all at war."

The boys huddled together, plotting new pranks. Except for Brody. He just quietly stared at his sister.

TOXIC

The "incidents" continued all week. By Friday, everyone walked around with squirt guns for self-defense.

"We need the ultimate prank," Jason said. "One that will force the girls to surrender." He was brainstorming ideas when Professor Plankton stopped him in the corridor.

"Mr. Fisher," the professor said, "I need your help. BURP is in great danger!"

"What happened?" Jason replied.

"It seems a toxic atmosphere has affected my students."

Jason shrugged nervously. "Lauren and I replaced all the filters, professor. The air should be fine."

"Really?" Professor Plankton crossed his arms. "Because I've noticed many unusual symptoms—bruised egos, hurtful language and an epidemic of rule-breaking." The professor leaned in closer. "This is no joke, Jason. If you don't clear the air with Miss Giles, there will be consequences—for all of you."

As he sat in the cafeteria, Jason felt sick. It wasn't the food—nobody dared to eat in public anymore. He just wished things could go back to normal. Students used to hang out together and have fun. Now they only talked about revenge and dirty tricks.

"I don't know what to do," Jason mumbled.

"We can't give up!" Reese said. "The girls will crack any day now."

"And then what?" Brody said. "What's the point of winning this war, anyway?"

He's right, Jason realized. *Even if we win, the girls still won't like us.* A verse from Luke flickered across his mind—"For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted."

"The only way to win is to lose," Jason said aloud.

"Huh?" Reese stared at him.

"Follow me, boys. I have a plan."

TURNING THE TIDE

That night, Jason and the boys marched to the girls' dormitory. Brody held a ruler with a rectangle of white cloth dangling from it.

"What's that supposed to be?" Lauren scoffed.

"A white flag of truce," Brody said. "I sacrificed my cleanest T-shirt to make it."

"We've come to surrender," Jason said. "Lauren, I owe you an apology. Not because you beat me, but because I was wrong. I'm sorry that I embarrassed you, I'm sorry I pulled pranks on you and I'm sorry that I allowed this fight to hurt others, too. Will you forgive me?"

Lauren squinted. "Is this a trick?"

"No," Reese said. "We just want to be friends again."

"And to prove that we're sorry, we'd like to do your chores," Jason said.

"Boys cleaning? Now I know it's a trick!" Mia joked.

The boys swept the floors and wiped down the walls. They even scrubbed the toilets. At first, the girls just watched. Then one by one, they offered to help.

"Thanks, Jason," Lauren said. "I'm sorry, too. Why don't we celebrate our truce with these cookies my mom sent?"

"Deal," Jason said. "As long as you take the first bite."

SHARE THE SCHOOL

Jason realized that, especially in such close quarters, prank wars and bad attitudes hurt everyone. Even if your school isn't an undersea laboratory, God wants you to respect your classmates.

Follow the directions below, then read the circled words to discover what Matthew 5:44 says.

1. Circle all **three-letter** words.
2. Reading across the rows, circle the **8th** and **18th** words.
3. Circle words that contain exactly **three e's**.
4. Circle words that rhyme with ***dove*** or ***rose***.

THUS	BE	LOVE	AS
I	FORGIVE	KIND	YOUR
TOGETHER	ENEMIES	IN	EVERY
AND	TRUST	LORD	WILL
UPON	PRAY	ME	FOR
HELP	TO	QUIET	THEIR
THOSE	WICKED	JELLY	HEARTS
BRING	PEACE	WHO	CALL
ON	SHALL	MY	PERSECUTE
LIGHT	YOU	FIND	IT

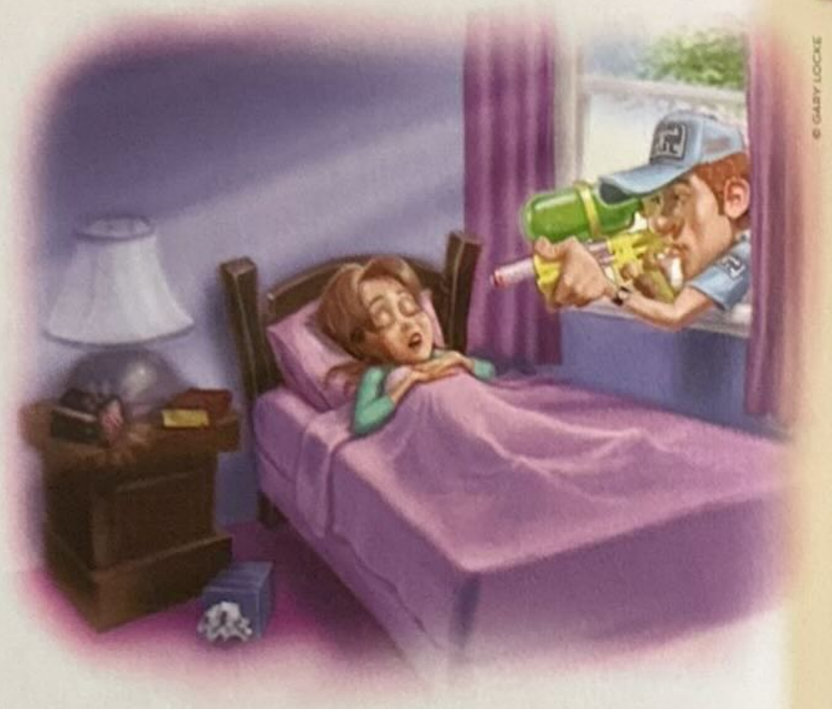
Answer (hold up to a mirror): As for you who are listening, I say: Love your enemies. Pray for those who persecute you!

Candid Conversations with

Connie

by Kathy Buchanan

Adventures in ODYSSEY



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Sooooo Early

"Attention, everyone!" I shouted as I entered Whit's End. "I've made an important decision."

"Ooh, you're finally going to clean out your car?" Wooton said.

"Or stop eating whipped cream for breakfast?" Penny added.

Eugene glanced at his watch. "Perhaps you've decided to show up on time . . . starting tomorrow."

(Sometimes I think my friends know me too well. Why can't they just say, "Oh, what is it, Connie?")

"None of the above," I said, ignoring their suggestions. "I'm going to wake up earlier so I can read the Bible."

"That's great!" Wooton cheered, but Eugene and Penny smiled nervously.

"What's wrong?" I asked.

"You're not really a *morning* person," Penny said.

Eugene nodded. "Forgive our skepticism, Miss Kendall, but recent studies show that 92 percent of new habits fail."

"It's not a new habit," I argued. "When I first became a Christian, I studied the Bible every morning and read two chapters every night. I really want to do that again—and I will."

Well, I thought I would. When my alarm went off at 5:30 a.m., my brain started making excuses:

- *Sunday is a day of rest. I should go back to bed.*
- *I can't start a new habit on a Monday. Maybe tomorrow.*
- *It's still dark outside. The clock must be lying.*
- *That's it. I'm throwing this clock against the wall!*
- *Zzzzz.* (I broke the alarm clock yesterday, so no alarm.)

By Friday, I was a mopey mess. "I think I'm in the 92 percent," I told Eugene.

"Might I suggest a strategy to increase the likelihood of advancement?"

"Um, sure."

"Ask your friends for help." Eugene smiled. "You don't have to do this alone."

Together, we came up with a plan. Penny loaned me her alarm clock. I put it across the room, so I'd have to actually get out of bed to turn it off. If I was still asleep at 5:45, when Wooton came by on his mail route, he'd spray a squirt gun through my window. Every day, Eugene asked me to "report" about what I'd read that morning.

I have to admit, I got soaked by the squirt gun more than a few times. And I owe Penny a new alarm clock, since I smashed hers on an especially sleepy Tuesday. But more days than not, I got up early and read the Bible. Really!

Just this morning, I read Galatians 6. One of the verses popped out at me—"We must not get tired of doing good, for we will reap at the proper time if we don't give up."

I know spending time with God is good, and I don't want to give up. I'm glad my friends are helping me to keep trying.

U Ask

Q My friend at church goes to public school, but I am home-schooled. Sometimes she forgets and acts like it's a crime to be home-schooled. How can I respond?

Home Defender, 12, Rockwall, Texas

© BRAD WALKER

A This question from the March 2014 issue struck a chord with many *Clubhouse* readers. Here's some of the advice you gave:

Explain to your friend all the work you do. You do the same work she does, just in different places.

Savannah K., 11
Lake Charles, Louisiana

Get involved in a home-school group. There's lots of home-schoolers out there.

John T., 9, Phoenix, Arizona

Bring your friend over to try home schooling for a day! Or shadow your friend at her public school and talk about the differences.

Julia and Luke B., 13 and 15
Waterbury Center, Vermont

Try telling your friend that you don't like it when she is rude about home-schooling. She probably isn't trying to be mean, just joking around.

Hunter W., 12, Hamilton, Michigan

Tell her everyone has been called to be schooled in their own way—whether that's public school, private school or home school.

Elena E., 11
Redwood Valley, California

Show her similarities between home-school work and activities and public-school work and activities.

Jessica D., 12, Thirroul, Australia

Ask her what she thinks she is learning that you're not. Share with each other what you are learning.

Elizabeth P., 11, Blaine, Minnesota

Q People treat me like I am a child. I want to tell them I'm not one, but I don't want to be rude. What should I do?

Not A Child, 9, Forest, Virginia

How would you handle a situation like this? Send your answer to:

"U Ask," *Clubhouse* magazine
8605 Explorer Dr.
Colorado Springs, CO 80920

In Canada, write to:
Focus on the Family
19946 80A Ave., Langley, BC V2Y 0J8

Be sure to include your name, birth date and full address.

Q My neighbor is nice, but she copies everything I do and buys the same things I have. It's annoying. How can I get her to stop?

Trend Setter, 14, Concord, North Carolina

A An old saying goes, "Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery." Maybe your neighbor is trying to be like you because she admires you and wants you to like her back.

Give her some positive feedback about the unique person God created her to be. The more she appreciates the way God made her, the less she'll want to be like anyone else—including you.

At the same time, be the best role model you can be. Ephesians 5:1 tells us to be "imitators of God." Make sure your neighbor sees God's character in you as she watches how you live. And don't miss the chance to share your relationship with Jesus. That's one part of who you are that you definitely want her to imitate.

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTELY

Defending Truth, Justice and Lots More Truuuth!

A true hero cares about people—especially kids trapped in Blue Cupid's invisible **prison of loneliness.**

BLUE CUPID

MISS YOU, I MISS YOU

Whoa! Thanks for rescuing me.

CRASH!

CREATED BY WOOTON BASSETT
ART BY DENNIS EDWARDS

Don't waste your **freedom**. Get out of here before this band makes you sad again.

Galatians 5:1

Noise-canceling earmuffs

Hey Cap, I'm back. How can anyone be **that lonely** in the middle of a sold-out concert?

Lots of kids feel abandoned at school, Hana. It's about **connections**, not crowds.

ACHING IN MY EMPTINESS

NUMB 2 LOVE

Speaking of *crowds*, I could use some help down here.

I'm **too old** to pose as a Blue Cupid fan. Besides, you're doing great!

Not a teenage chin

I don't know what I'd do without you.

A blackout? Those kids are in danger! Even **more** danger than before!

PTTTT

*instant power outage

Hana, we need your light. Fly into the sky and burn like a star.

...Hana?

Oh, no.

Missing something?

FEAR CHEMIST!
What have you done with Hana?

Don't worry, Captain. Just do what I say, and you've got **nothing to fear.**

NEXT ISSUE:
RULED BY FEAR

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FOCUS ON THE FAMILY

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Colorado Springs, CO 80920

ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

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Focus on
the Family

Grandparents' Day is September 7.

How do you honor your elders?

[redacted]

5016167

Answers (hold up to a mirror): scissors, scrapbook, scrap, scrapper, scrapbook, scrapbook, scrapbook